

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SY-05 MCT-01 HA-05 TRSE-00 /039 W
-----075671 272149Z /73

P R 272106Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5525
INFO ICA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 3255

DEPARTMENT FOR ARA/ECA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SHUM, OEXC, (YOFRE, JUAN BAUTISTA)
SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY RICARDO YOFRE "ON LEAVE" ABROAD

REF: BUENOS AIRES 2621

1. RICARDO YOFRE, UNDER SECRETARY OF THE
PRESIDENCY, TELEPHONED EMBASSY A LITTLE OVER
A WEEK AGO TO CONFIRM THAT HE WAS LEAVING
THE COUNTRY ON A "VACATION TRIP" ABROAD.
HE SAID HE PLANNED TO VISIT RIO DE JANEIRO
AND FROM THERE TRAVEL TO THE US, WHERE HE
WOULD SPEND PART OF HIS STAY IN WASHINGTON.
HE DECLINED OUR OFFER TO FACILITATE
APPOINTMENTS FOR HIM IN THE US, SAYING HE
WAS STRICTLY ON PRIVATE TRAVEL. HE SAID
HE PLANNED TO RETURN TO ARGENTINA AROUND
THE END OF MAY.

2. YOFRE'S COMMENTS TO US BEFORE DEPARTING LEAD US TO
BELIEVE THAT HIS DECISION TO TRAVEL ABROAD IS A
CONSEQUENCE OF THE LATEST BOMB ATTACK AGAINST HIS HOUSE
(SEE MEMCON DATED APRIL 4, 1978). THE EDITOR OF
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"CONFIRMADO" MAGAZINE, WHO IS WELL-CONNECTED POLITICALLY,
TOLD US THAT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE DECIDED THAT YOFRE
SHOULD TAKE HIS TRIP AFTER CONSULTING INTERIOR MINISTER
HARGUINDEGUY, WHO ADVISED THE PALACE THAT HE WAS UNABLE
TO GUARANTEE THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY FURTHER ATTACKS
AGAINST YOFRE--PRESUMABLY BY ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ARMED
FORCES WHO OPPOSE PRESIDENT VIDELA'S "POLITICAL PROPOSAL."

THERE ARE ALSO RUMORS IN POLITICAL CIRCLES THAT YOFRE MAY NOT RETURN TO HIS POST AND PERHAPS MAY BE OFFERED AN AMBASSADORSHIP INSTEAD.

3. EMBASSY IS SEEKING TO LOCATE DR. YOFRE'S BROTHER, JUAN BAUTISTA TO DETERMINE HIS POSSIBLE QUALIFICATIONS FOR A STUDY GRANT TO THE US. BEFORE DEPARTING THE COUNTRY, YOFRE URGED US AGAIN TO DO WHAT WE COULD FOR HIS BROTHER--ALTHOUGH HE EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT OVER OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT JUAN BAUTISTA WAS FEARFUL THAT HIS LIFE WAS IN DANGER AS WELL (BUMPUS-CHAPLIN LETTER OF MARCH 30.). WHATEVER THE TRUTH OF THE DANGER ANGLE, WE REMAIN INTERESTED IN BEING RESPONSIVE TO UNDER SECRETARY YOFRE'S REQUEST (ALTHOUGH BASED ON WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR, WE SUSPECT THAT THE BROTHER WOULD BE HARD PUT TO EARN A SCHOLARSHIP ON HIS ACADEMIC MERITS ALONE).

4. BEFORE MEETING WITH JUAN BAUTISTA, WE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR DROPPING THIS PROBLEM BACK IN ORFILE/A LAP AND SEEKING AN OAS GRANT, AS PER OUR REQUEST REFTEL.
CASTRO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EDUCATION GRANTS, EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BUENOS03255
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780181-0011
Format: TEL
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780411/aaaaaiyh.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ca44bda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BUENOS AIRES 2621
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2833387
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNDER SECRETARY RICARDO YOFRE ("ON LEAVE" ABROAD
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SHUM, OEXC, AR, (YOFRE, JUAN BAUTISTA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ca44bda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014